

The New Northwest

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FREE SPEECH, FREE PRESS, FREE PEOPLE.

Correspondents writing over assumed signatures must make known their names to the Editor, or no attention will be given to their communications.

THE THUNDER SPIRIT.—A TRADITION OF THE SENECA INDIANS.

Herno, the great Thunder Spirit, had his lodge behind the sheet of water that pours down at the Falls of Niagara. For a very long time he dwelt there, astonishing the Indians with his stinging peals, but never venturing forth to practice his strange art before their eyes. They could hear him, and knew he was there, but never, as yet, had he been seen, but for a little incident, the results of which brought him forth.

A young and beautiful maiden, residing at Seteca village, just above the falls, had been contracted in marriage by her father, to an old man of disagreeable manners and hideous person. She at once resolved to seek death, rather than drag out the life of misery which such a union might bring about; and with this object in view, she launched forth from the village in a bark canoe, singing her own death song, until she took the awful leap.

But death was not ready for her. Herno, the Thunder Spirit, happened to be wide awake, and when he saw her coming down among the foaming waters, he took her in his arms, and conveyed her to his home behind the falls.

Of course, the maiden had romance enough about her to be grateful for all this, more especially when she found the monster her "gruel par-ant" had selected to comfort her through life. She fell upon the neck of the Thunderer, and wept sweet tears. The tears softened his stern heart, and led him to smooth her tresses. In short, to hurry through a long story, they got to billing and cooing, they fell in love, they made the interesting affair known to each other, and the woman, who was usually a beautiful maiden, became the wife of Herno, the Thunder Spirit. And, as a matter of course, she was very happy.

About this time the Senecas of the village above the falls were visited with a pestilence, which swept off by hundreds, and a while some prayed to the Great Spirit for help, others gathered around the cataract and sent in their petitions to Herno. The tale of their sufferings moved the Thunderer, and he sent the monster under the waters, in order that he might die and be buried within its reach.

As soon as the Indians learned this, they pulled up and moved to another locality; consequently, when the great serpent employed the waters as usual, the earth brought him no food. This was an affair so strange that he crawled forth to see what it meant, when, to his surprise, he found the village was deserted.

Many cures on the head of the Thunderer, as the author of his misfortune, the serpent took the trail of the retreating Indians, and started away in hot pursuit. The maiden still loved her people, and she sought the way to move on to effect their further destruction, she appealed to her husband to arrest him. Herno was not deaf to her entreaties; and so he stepped forth from his hiding-place and launched a hissing bolt after the serpent, which struck the waters, in order that he might die and be buried within its reach.

It almost entirely ruined the home of the Thunderer—for it reduced the great space behind the water to a very narrow channel. He occupies it as a sleeping apartment, however, and you may now hear him snoring under there, if you stand on the shore; but if he would exercise himself in his favorite pastime of throwing thunderbolts, he is forced to come forth into space less limited.

Unreasonable as this myth may sound, there can be no doubt but that the Senecas believed every word of it. When they were to be met with in the Niagara country, they pointed out a place near the mouth of Cayuga Creek, where the banks were shelved out in a semi-circular form, and declared that it had been done by the serpent, in his death throes, after having been wounded by Herno's thunderbolt. And to this tradition may be attributed their custom of putting away their dead upon scaffolds above the ground, instead of burying them.

WOMEN AND HOME.—There is a bundle of delight bound up in the sweet word, home. The word is typical of comfort, love, sympathy, and all the other qualities that constitute the delights of social life. Were the everyday employments of man of our intelligent and affectionate families faithfully portrayed, they would exceed, in moral heroism, interest, and romance most of the productions of the pen of fiction. The social well-being of society rests on our home, and what are the foundations of our homes but woman's care and devotion? A good mother is worth an army of acquaintances, and a true-hearted, noble-minded sister is more precious than the "dear five hundred" of a fortune. Those who have played around the same door-step, basked in the same mother's smile, in whose veins the same blood flows, are bound by a sacred tie that can never be broken. Distances may separate, quarrels may occur, but those who have loved each other love anything must have at times a bubbling up of fond recollections, and a yearning after the joys of by-gone days. Every woman has a mission on earth. There is "something to do" for every one, and it is the duty of every woman to attend to, some class of unfortunate, degraded, or homeless humanity to befriend. That soul is poor indeed that leaves the world without having exerted an influence that will be felt for good after she has passed away.—Erc.

THE RULE.—We should never remember the benefits we have conferred, nor forget the favors we have received.

NO STORY YET.

A letter from Mrs. Dunlaway, under date of October 21st, informs us that she mailed the story at that date at New York City, but it has not yet arrived, and, much to our regret, we are again compelled to go to press without it. The vexatious delay is doubtless owing to the careless handling of the mails.

LETTER FROM MRS. LOUGHARY.

To the Editor of the New Northwest: After some fears and tremblings, our opponents retire from the conflict satisfied with the defeat of the bill asking for universal suffrage, assuming the right to "legislate for the women of Oregon in all cases whatsoever"—an act which destroys the spirit of true Democracy by refusing the people of Oregon an opportunity to decide a question that properly belongs to them. Notwithstanding all this, the friends of the cause feel quite jubilant over our success, as far more was accomplished in the Legislature than the most sanguine suffragists expected. We feel quite safe in saying that if the amount of influence had been used in the Senate that was brought to bear upon the members of the House, the bill would have passed.

The presence of the women in the assembly, silent as they were compelled to be, proved a power over the feelings and actions of our law-makers, unwilling as some of them are to acknowledge it. The petitions of so many of the best of Oregon's women, accompanied with such earnest appeals, could not be gained by our most bitter opponents.

Mr. Ferguson of Yamhill urged "to submit the question to the people, thereby settling the question and suppressing further agitation." Mr. F. and all other sensible men very well know where the danger is—they fear the agitation. They know that the agitation of any subject is its life, while stagnation is death. That member that claimed to "have discovered more advantages in universal suffrage than many conceded" doubtless had felt the effects of this agitation. Nor do we wonder that the gentleman from Benton felt that he must vote for the measure, when a larger list of petitioners was sent up from his village and neighborhood than from any other county in the State considering the number of inhabitants.

We are informed that the bill was rushed through the Senate without debate with closed doors. Why all this, except they feared the agitation of a subject that demanded justice only?

The suppression of agitation of the slavery question was the "sheet anchor" that kept the "peculiar institution" from being dashed to pieces for years, and just in proportion to the effort made to diffuse light and knowledge into the minds of the slaves and the slave-holder did the moorings give way.

Let the lessons of the past be a new impetus to the women of Oregon. Agitation is our present pressing want. We have this in our power. Why not wield it to the best of advantage in every available way? Sustain the New Northwest and keep its pages fluttering in the breeze. By all means, let us have more organized effort. We have before urged the vice-presidents to organize county associations in their respective counties. The petitions that were sent into the Legislature were from the few counties alone that are organized into working order. Several thousands of names could have been easily secured had any system of labor been adopted. Then the opposers could no longer say, "Only a few of the women of Oregon are asking for the ballot." Thousands of our women desire it, and I know whereof I speak.

Permit this suggestion—the immediate organization of woman's working clubs in every county, town and village in the State if possible. This can be done by a few energetic women, and the men, too, are willing to lend a helping hand. We are just approaching another long Oregon winter, when ample time and opportunity will be afforded for such work. Let the science of government be taught, the principles that underlie the American government be discussed. Let it be seen that women are citizens under the law just as men are, in spite of Mr. Fidler's "angelic womanhood." Such meetings from week to week, or monthly, even, can be made both pleasant and profitable.

H. A. LOUGHARY.

Amity, October 30, 1876.

THE FIRST AIM OF EDUCATION.—I accept without qualification the first principle of our forefathers: that every boy born in the world should be put in the way of maintaining himself in independence. No education which does not make this its great aim is worth anything at all. There are but three ways of living, as some one has said—by working, by begging, or by stealing. Those who do not work, disguise it in whatever pretty language we please, are doing one of the other two. The practical necessities must take precedence of the intellectual. A tree must be rooted in the soil before it can bear flowers and fruit. A man must learn to stand upright upon his own feet to respect himself, to be independent of charity or accident. It is on this basis only that any superstructure of intellectual cultivation worth having can possibly be built.—Froude.

They rescued a girl who tried to drown herself in Buffalo the other day, and then fined her for "disorderly conduct."

"ONLY THREE GRAINS OF CORN."

BY MRS. S. HEWES, M. D.

Through the long and somber vista of departed years, up to a recent period, woman has held out her hand to man laden with all that her heart and soul possessed as a free will offering—physical, mental, and moral worth. She did not presume to ask for equal educational advantages; she scarcely dreamed of acquiring the professions. If she became interested in the political movements of the day, read newspapers, etc., she was called "strong-minded." Legally she had not equal ownership with the father in that little homestead where all the Websters, Clays, Lincolns, and Searles were born, reared, and tenderly cared for during the long twenty-one years of their minority. No, the law did not grant her equal ownership with the father to the person of those same boys, whom she gathered so gently about the maternal hearthstone.

Some years since a father in the State of New Jersey deeded his unborn child to a friend; at the proper time child was transferred to its legal owner, notwithstanding the protests and anguish of the mother's heart. All this was in accordance with the legal enactments of that State.

At the death of the father, how many beautiful, happy homes are at once divided up and legally consumed by the tedious, rambling process called law, that these same fathers helped to enact for the protection of wife and children?

Women have previously supplicated imploringly, asking, metaphorically speaking, for "only three grains of corn," modestly asking to be employed as teachers and servants at less wages than their brothers received for like services performed; gently knocking at the college doors; timidly creeping in as far as permitted, bearing their manifold burdens bravely; paying taxes without representation to build and support these same colleges whose doors are closed against her. These "three grains of corn" have sustained her "till the coming of the morn." The day-god has arisen with a brilliancy and power that awakens new thought, and laden with fresh magnetic glory, arouses all the proudest conceptions of manhood and womanhood.

With commendable zeal woman has invaded every avenue of labor; by her continual knocking she has opened many college doors, and through her growing intelligence she has proven to the satisfaction of a majority of noble men and women that she is worthy and competent to assume the burden of responsibility in the great political household—to stand by the side of man equal both in the home interests and the legislative halls. She truly merits that which she asks at your hands; and no longer satisfied with "three grains of corn," she must ere long share equally with yourselves the whole field.

Our Grandmothers' Ball Dresses.

A ball-room of the early times of the Regency would look strange to modern eyes. Brummel and his associates, the stiffly-starched neckcloth, and with the Regent, had held earnest council concerning the pattern and form of clothes. Coats might be any color—the light green, the fruitless plum, mulberry, or sky blue, was even remarkable—and burnished brass buttons were in general wear. Trowsers did not appear in the evening until about 1816; the Regent was proud of his calves, and the gentlemen who followed him were not less so. But to that measure he had to come at last, upon the peremptory behest of fashion. Every gentleman (and some ladies) took snuff, and affected peculiarity about snuff-boxes, indulging in great variety, and making collections of the same, sometimes of an extraordinary value. It was a time of rich waistcoats, variegated and embossed, with false collars of suppositious other waistcoats appearing above the neckline, and the evening dress of the male dancer was of a far more party-colored character than in these days of funeral black clothes and white ties. Indeed, there was an abundance of color in the ball-rooms of the Regency. The skirts were of great variety, and made for quantity. The skirts were neither long nor broad; they clung closely to the limbs, and made liberal revelation of sandaled feet and silken-stocking feet. Heads were very tall, the hair being piled aloft, and above it soaring feathers and climbing flowers. The arm, clothed in a kid glove long as a stocking, appeared at the end of a short sleeve, pulled into a globular form. Waists were as short as could be. It was thus the grandmothers and great-grandmothers of the present generation of dancers were equipped when called upon to decide the momentous question touching the propriety or impropriety of the waltz, and to those whether they would be prudent or profligate, for that was the favorite way of presenting the matter.—Harper's Bazar.

AFFECTATION OF SVAUITY.—There are some people who affect a want of affectation, and flatter themselves that they are above flattery; they are proud of being thought extremely humble, and would go round the world to punish those who thought them capable of revenge; they are so satisfied of the suavity of their own temper that they would quarrel with their dearest benefactor only for doubting it. And yet very blind are all their acquaintances to these their numerous qualifications and merits, that the possessors of them invariably discover, when it is too late, that they have lived in the world without a single friend, and are about to leave it without a single mourner.—Bacon.

A dog was buried in Greenwood Cemetery not long since with the usual ceremonies. Colored people, we believe, are not interred there yet.

Hallie's Hair.

BY MADGE CARROLL.

"You don't know how glad I was when Mrs. Kepler told me she expects to keep your cousin with her until Christmas. I shall so enjoy knowing her better. What beautiful hair she has."

"Beautiful and expensive, too, the color is so rare. Dealers say it is almost impossible to get it."

"Do you mean I should understand that Miss Dewing's hair—"

"Excuse me, Mr. Traquair. I see you have waited up for me, and need not detain you. Good-night."

"Seeing her daughter in an unusual state of excitement, Mrs. Dewing ventured a question: 'What is all this, Dena? Has Mr. Traquair proposed?'"

"Don't be ridiculous," was the sharp reply, and, flinging her hat one way and gloves another, Dena retired to her own room.

"Beginning with a falsehood and ending in disrespect, Dena Dewing's introduction is not a favorable one. It serves, however, to show the girl as she really was, not as Mr. Traquair knew her when she met him, one year after having fallen in love with him."

Hallie's hair again, and Dena gave her own a vicious tug; was it always to be Hallie's hair? Was that golden web to be woven across her every path? This very night it caught the eye pair of eyes in all the world, and longed to hold; might not the glittering tangle next entangle the only heart she cared to call her own? How vividly she recalled the night that brought her orphaned, stranger cousin from the far South to their home. A home where, up to that fateful day, she had alone, an only, inordinately-indulged child. A picture of Hallie, as she stood one moment apart on the crimson hearth-rug, blistered the envious, jealous heart that beat it, a slight, shy figure, some thirteen summers crowned, with a face delicate as a wind flower, and a wealth of wondrously bright hair flowing to the very hem of her mourning dress. Grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins assembled to welcome David's orphaned and only child, heard his breath in something akin to awe. It seemed as though a sprite had leaped from the canal coil's hair—some fire-fairy, sable and gold, glitter and bloom, that had come winging into her red curls never to be tempted again. For an instant this impression prevailed, then grandmama inaugurated a rush upon her by crying out: "Come here, little Girl Gold Locks, let me have a look at that hair; how lovely has it become! I don't wonder that it flies away with you to-morrow."

Yes, Hallie's hair. Always Hallie's hair! Dena Dewing, failing to grasp the real charm her cousin carried with her, began to draw it out after her as men's strength lay in her locks. Deprived of this she was powerless. A whisper sent the family rounds that Dena had once attempted to clip, next actually to burn those beautiful braids. No foundation for the rumormongers, however, as she covered other than the fact that Hallie secured a home in another city, and her hair for a time lost its burnished sheen.

"Dear little lambkin," bewailed Grandmama Dewing, "how long have you stayed an hour under the same roof with that envious, ill-tempered Dena."

However, everybody agreed that since her eighteenth birthday—she was now twenty, six months Hallie's hair had been a marked change in Dena Dewing. A clever cousin declared her to be cultivating the Christian graces in order to catch Mr. Traquair. Whatever the cause, the girl—with the exception of her personal appearance—was certainly improved. With a dead-white complexion, faded eyes and hair, mealy eyebrows and lashes, and more than a suspicion of freckles, the Quaker colors and simplicity she had adopted, in girl parlance, "killed" her. Her form, however, persisted in this species of self-struction, even to the extent of laying aside a heavy braid of ashy red hair and frizzes, then faced a generation of switch-burdened women with a coolness and courage as rare as the varieties of climates.

"Agnes," said Mr. Traquair, prepared, as was his custom, to give an account of his evening's entertainment to his invalid sister, "I met to-night the first lady that over upon my soul—"

"I don't know who you mean," interrupted Jenny Wren's. "Plain, grave, punctilious, he's not in the least like the girl I met to-night in the street."

"I don't know who Mr. Traquair haunts me," mused Hallie, sitting alone in her bowler hat, thick and bright as Jenny Wren's. "Plain, grave, punctilious, he's not in the least like the girl I met to-night in the street."

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up relationship, I was obliged to invite her, and, in fact, an ally glad to have her, but she's not to be allowed to strike her target's center and carry off the mission-school teacher's prize. Beside—Mrs. Kepler paused, casting a keen, sly glance upon the face before her. "You're not falling in love with Mr. Traquair, are you, Dena?"

Dena promptly disclaimed any such idea.

"Your conduct, then, was prompted entirely by the very natural and reasonable jealousy any girl with almost no hair would feel for one supporting a whole mountain of it."

"Yes, you understand me perfectly."

"There was no mistake about it, but Mrs. Kepler went on as though accepting the declaration as a mere transient fit. "That's not on which I was about to say, I owe this piece of pomposity to a grudge for his high and mighty lipfulness toward little mite of a me. We'll pull the wool over her eyes so completely, she'll think it's Hallie's hair, Mead, while we must be cautious and not tell any downright fibs. Are those you have repeated your exact and only words?"

"They are. Mr. Traquair is too much of a gentleman to introduce the subject again."

"Assuredly. Then, don't you see, you stated a simple fact, that is all. I'd give my head for it if it could wear a halo."

"A marvelous blending of pure fed and yellow, gold, neither one, the other, or either, because that doesn't describe it. Almost impossible to get it? I should think so; did ever another hair wear so beautiful a crown?"

"I'm sorry I've nothing else to recommend."

"I see a little sensitive on the subject."

"I don't recollect, because I'm an enthusiast on the subject of your hair. Even our invulnerable Mr. Traquair expressed respect for it."

"What lovely hair she has!" He always visits alone. Such a pity Mrs. Traquair is so confined at home with that daughter. Odd about Agnes, isn't it, Dena? There's a mystery somewhere."

As Mrs. Kepler rattled on a great deal fell from Dena Dewing's heart. The woman who could so cleverly make Hallie feel a trifle vexed about her hair, leave her under the impression that the hair was the only thing that was a wife instead of a widow's mother, and seal her lips from inquiry concerning the family health with the hint of a mystery, was certainly the one to conduct her case and bring it to a happy issue.

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